

*Aubade*



*1978*

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*Aubade*

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**Leslie Wells**



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## Seeing Art Everywhere

I passed a woman on the street;  
her hair flowed softly into air  
and I knew her to be something beautiful  
but it was hard to pinpoint why.

The quick snap of a black feather  
floating off from the back of a coat  
and lying dead alone on the sidewalk;  
it was art before the crowd mashed it in.

The trees, glorious vivid brilliant  
throwing their darts at the ground  
and making the earth bleed, red, yellow,  
until finally the wounds become stiff and cold.  
The naked, bare trees taunt the earth  
and make their survival by sucking its life  
the grey sky cries to be underneath  
to be able to look up to something for once.

In a city crowd art slipped out of a raincoat  
and made its way down the alleys and streets  
it searched for a home, cosy in from the cold  
but all it found were crushed, grimy spoons.  
Then Big A went to the country  
it followed a farmer around  
but was here its home? Why, no,  
the farmer wore green pants with purple socks.

So art went back into the city,  
found its way back inside the raincoat pocket  
where a dented spoon and a purple sock  
threatened to fight it out on the streets.

All the world exists in a pocket  
and all our dreams in a ripped bleeding sock  
and all reality lies in the spoon  
that we eat daily for a bitter surprise.

Leslie Wells

## Anticipation

Waiting, I hate waiting -  
and wastebaskets!  
They're so empty -  
so full, full of nothing.  
What will he say?  
How do I react?  
I'm dying for a coke.

And damn those curtains!  
They've been hanging there  
dirty and crooked for days  
while I sit like  
an idiot -

Why is he late!  
He is never late  
I'm going to go  
crazy.

I can feel it,  
I'm dizzy.  
I didn't eat anything again  
crazy lady, that was stupid,  
I know, but I couldn't help it.  
it?  
I was nervous.  
you were nervous?

Yes you were nervous,  
that is why  
you neglected to brush your teeth,  
isn't it?

Dear God,  
preserve me,  
pregnant as I am.

Linda Capaldi



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Coal black skin  
Glimmers in the sunlight  
Slender limbs flash  
As she frolics  
Back and forth  
Rollicking on a lush  
Emerald carpet  
Speckled with  
Juicy red poppies  
And enveloped  
By a crystallizing azure.

Cindy Jones

Rosas  
bellas  
hieren -  
como tambien los  
Momentos  
bellos  
al recordarlos y  
no poderlos revivir . . .

Zaza

Thick, pink slices  
Cool,  
Sweet,  
Delicious  
Soothing our  
sun-parched tongues  
with juicy swallows.

Resa Cirrincione

## The Day Of Grazing Conifers

*Consider how the leaves land welded close,  
Had said that day the grazing conifers;  
Consider rocks, by stream and rock held close,  
And stars the suns of equal atmospheres;  
Consider you, the force and air compact  
Against yourself, and you against the force;  
Consider you, returned as grains of wheat,  
The soil accepting all throughout its course.  
And so the grazing conifers had said,  
As I had visited their leaning speech,  
At once a boy, a man, and all their dead;  
As that, my life is heard in bowing trees.  
Consider night and day the dawn and dusk,  
Their look to each in doing when they must.*

S.M. Newman

The Moderns, screaming *Newness*, are sincere  
In wanting changed character for the past  
And see tradition in a novel cast:  
The thoughts of Now are dressed in ancient gear;  
These newly sprung innovators appear  
To be like the young feline who steadfast  
Claws at the old chair which was unsurpassed  
As bed for Old Whiskers some other year.  
Familiar haven (old cat was content),  
The easychair became a brief respite:  
Renewal of being its fitting use;  
Youngster ignores the scratching post present,  
Destroying poor chair, which may soon invite  
Throwing it out and the end of poor Puss.

Robert Graves







## Upon a Mountain Top, Many Days Ago

Upon a mountain top, many days ago,  
I faced the wind, firmly testing its strength with my body,  
Catching its constancy with flapping, tattered clothing.  
Delighting in the cold dryness cutting my bare skin;  
With hair ruffled and wild in the gale,  
I snared the sun, intense, warm, and  
Reaching far with eyes searching, senses tense,  
Absorbed the vibrant fulness of the day.

A smooth range of peaks in the distance stood.  
Gentle extensions from my own mount  
Sliding onward beneath firm feet, looming large yet unreachable;  
Over the slopes hovered a misty purple haze  
Illumined by the sun, glowing and undissolvable.  
The mountains' iridescent lifefull aura.

A hawk, alone in the bordered sky,  
Glided over the heights, rising on the steady draft.  
Hovering now, then swooping on the smallest tip of wing,  
Master of the currents, restless game-player of the air,  
Ceaseless watcher between sun and earth.

Standing dwarfed among those giants  
Unmoving, patiently hoarding secrets of ages before man's nativity,  
Thought, of personal smallness, pervaded my reverie.  
Nature's calm strength, unaggressive yet serenely overpowering,  
Once more my selfish individuality had robbed, and  
Once again, cradled in her warm sensuous Bosom,  
I felt the maternal tie of child and mother  
When their hearts are one.

Mark Torgeson

## **An Early Evening Rain, Rocking on the Porch**

The coupled cars moved stumbling by  
Their lovers, hugging the road,  
Clouds, as lovers, coast quietly in  
Lovers' and thunderous meetings  
And rainy greetings.

Sitting on this sloped grey slab porch  
Sipping cups and bottles of wine  
I rock the rockings of crack faced men,  
Yells of infant young men, and the thoughts  
Blind men scratch in the dark for.

The cool country town breeze  
Sniffs at my after work sweat, a sun sprinkle  
Raining against the red setting sky.  
And the boards creak to count the seconds,  
To count the reasons for children  
Running, and dark birds calling at children,  
And listless men standing to call children.

The rocking must end as miniature adults find  
Haven and blind men take their burnt glasses off  
To count their money for beer.

S. M. Newman

## **Libido**

On the green leather desktop  
slim white fingers  
(guarded by lace cuffs)  
toy with a quill and watermark stationery,  
ready to pen, on the virgin sheets,  
wants as violent as the splattering of  
black ink on parchment.

Tutt Stapp



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Tutt Stapp



JMH





does it make you feel

like an outcast not every  
body was meant for law schoolthehillbloom ing  
dales or a suburban facsimile thereof--  
not you.

Are you sure you're different  
in some undefinablebut (definitely) good way and  
don't know what you're going to do about it any  
more? that there must be some decent explainable-to-your-parents  
way out besides the rusted

fire

escape?

That something will miraculously comeUP to  
save you from yourself  
shadow-boxing charades in a Tuesday night townhouse  
nylons and would it really be possible  
to cut your hair  
compound the suicide of life with defeat could it be you?  
don't give up the liferaft what happened to all that  
Power  
climb MOUNT NATAKA

icannot imagine living without you Susan  
you have spoiled me more than even i could spoil myself  
living like someone sucking a melting 5¢ popsicle  
who may or may not realize that  
sugar is addictive  
and probably wouldn't care too much

Dread of the syndrome creeps in silently to your  
self just when you would've found a warm place to sleep  
adam's rib weighs you down but for some reason  
something insists on a baby sometime  
so you can spread your pickled fatigues yes  
you.

Are you sure you're different?  
don't slip now it's too late to go back or  
do the birds have the right idea about winter?

Greyhound will miss me when i leave  
Fredericksburg especially during exams (they let me pay  
my fare in hall offenses now) it's not martha, it's MARY  
Mary Washington like the virgin?

(cont.)

Oblivion looms on the horizon but  
i haven't given it up no

not me

i've still got plenty of hall offenses to use

Jeannette Smith

Green thoughts drift slowly overhead,  
Leaving a taste of April air.  
It is a banishment of  
Time's despair.

Intimate thoughts of you and I  
Recall the dying summer's spangled explosion.  
Bright stars shine through bare trees.

New thoughts swirl and spiral down;  
White crystal flakes glitter and are gone.  
Time plummets past an unchanging  
world.

At last, all that is possible is realized:  
Among the autumn leaves we meet again.  
The snow forever fades  
to unveil eternal spring.

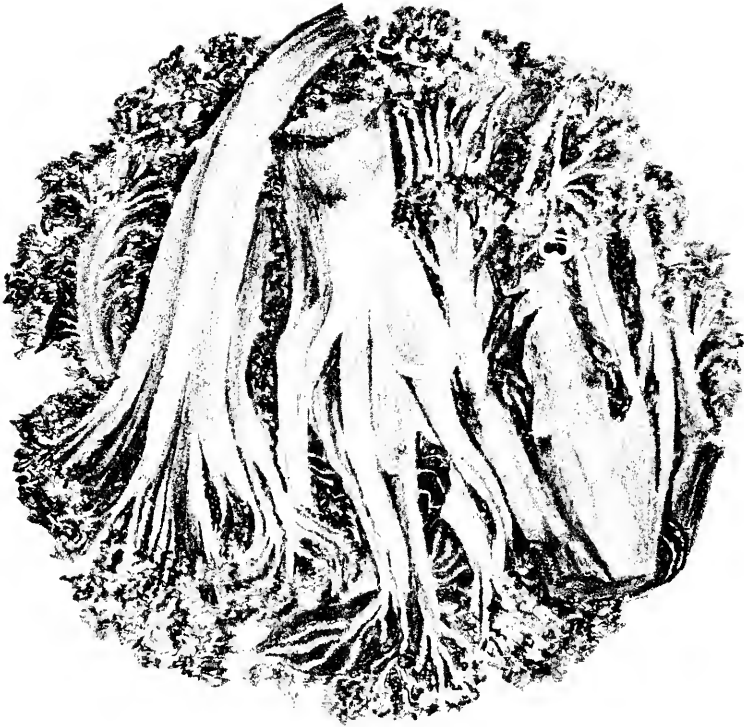
Ron Baker

**Dark - starred**

The night sky is hewn  
by a diamond-edged moon  
sending splinters of glass  
across the darkness.

Sally MacAdoo





## **The Runner**

Awakening to don musty,damp tennis shoes  
and socks gone thin from overuse  
the dawn person passes sleeping souls,  
goes stepping out into the cold.

Slow, plodding human legs  
drag his body up the stairs  
the chill air stings his prickling head  
his feet are lifeless clods of earth.

The ears prick; the head alerts  
at the sight of empty, shining track  
the nostrils snort and sniff the dirt  
and the legs begin swinging forward and back.

His motion allows him to carry the wind  
billowing out like a sail in his wake  
as he surges in strokes with the power to send  
him skimming across the dust-bitten lake.

Reeling and ripping around the last bend  
and finally reaching the trying last stretch  
the runner lengthens himself and extends  
to the uttermost limits of his quivering limbs.

The last mile is run; pace jogs to a halt  
hooves become feet once again on the track  
a tired man walks from the athletic field  
with the sun beating down on his perspiring back.

Leslie Wells

My son, how can I describe the old land to you,  
who have never seen it? The land is in our blood,  
now and forever, no matter where we must hie.

Aye, even the winter sky was different; grey,  
but full of light. And the clouds, forming, moving,  
twisting and dancing to the currents of the air.

And the rivers. my lad, the rivers!  
They rushed and gushed and leapt, and laughed,  
feeding the land, silver on green, all the way to the sea.

Even the green, ach, the green of the fields during  
sammaire. Alive, it was; strong and proud in its  
beauty. All else is pale and weak beside the glory of it.

But the air, my brea lad, most of all, the air.  
So clean, crisp, carrying the scent of the gorse  
and the new grass, wild and free.

Ah son, how can I describe the old land to you,  
who have never seen it? The land is in our blood,  
now and forever, no matter where we must hie.

Mark Nicholson

Sitting  
in the small space  
between the washing machine and furnace  
there a young girl read early mornings  
in the warmest spot in the house.

Leslie Wells



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Leslie Wells







They were born  
in the winds of a summer  
that scoured the face  
of a precious soil that,  
so gently stirring,  
                    rising,  
                    cementing,  
was forming all  
its time-bought elements  
and marking its notch  
on her smooth crusts . . .  
When, like a card hand  
                    badly played,  
                    the ace illy timed,  
the fertile, timeless earth  
was stripped of all its  
                    coverings, defenseless and raped,  
                    to blow  
away, creaking in  
                    its absence  
                    a much smaller reality  
of time,  
and life, lost.

Valerie Smith

The evening is carved from light;  
Slow sculpturing of air reveals the

Sparkling facets of jeweled reality;  
Drifting patterns of smoke and

Space define the pace of a moment's  
Earth-bound observations. This could

Be called the Dance of the Changer  
And the Three, but that would not be all.

Ron Baker

## A Weakness For Symmetry

it's impossible to tell  
what is real at night,  
distant sounds and glancing shapes  
lure and lead one through loneliness,  
in the silence and the dark,  
on and on and on  
where beyond, always beyond  
there is something lying in a somewhere place.

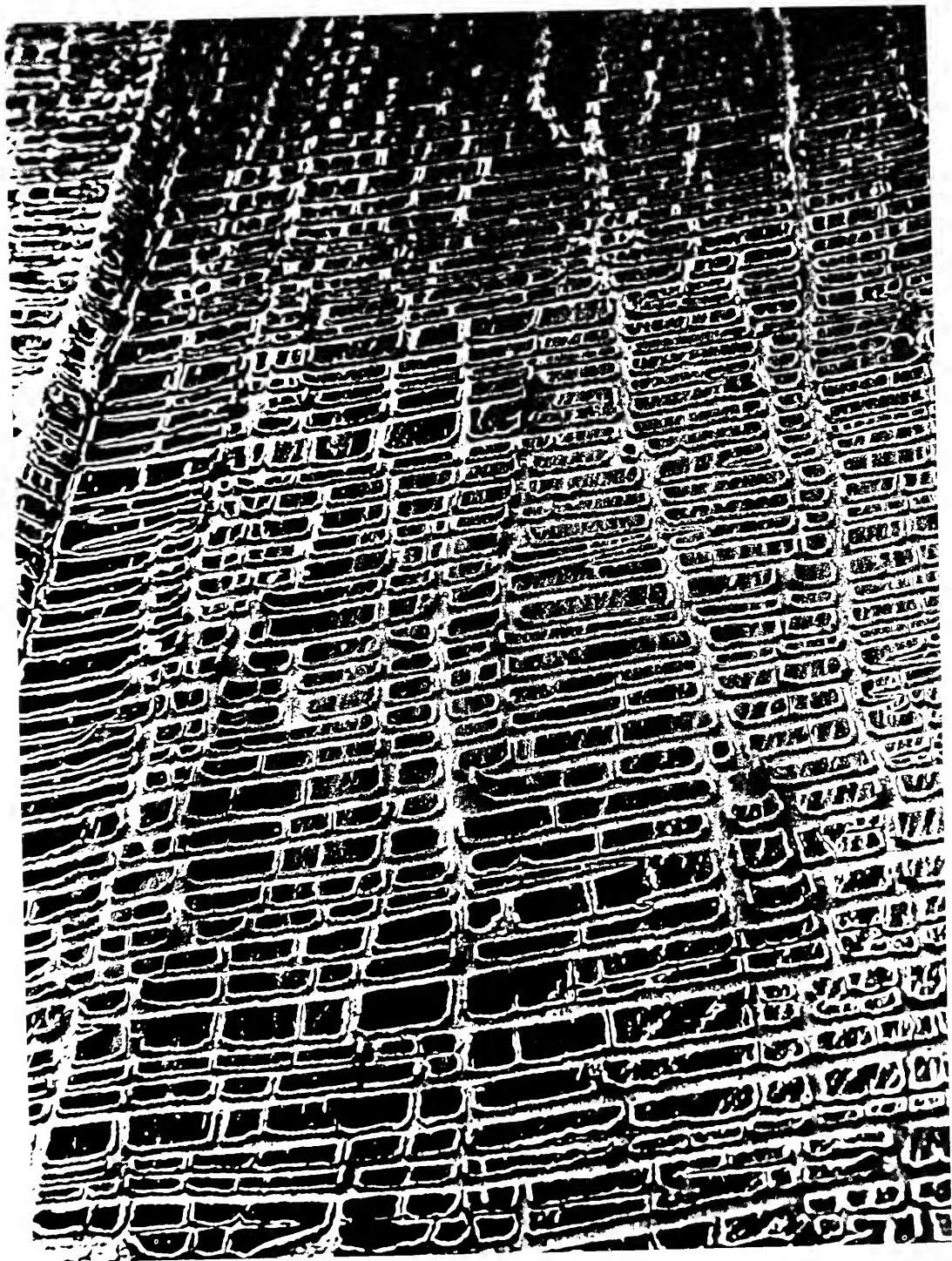
victims of sleep,  
the littlest ones seem to hide beneath their pillows  
and suffocate night after night.  
the whimpers, cries and calls  
seek to pass through walls  
that separate the sound from the shape.

are you dreaming?      are you dreaming?  
or has the hero      deserted the dream,  
leaving behind the monsters and the miserable  
to wander about aimlessly?

where is the edge of river, of cliff, of time?  
it is only that space of decision  
between flight and submission.  
where one has leapt  
the bounds of the self,  
another has clung close to fear.

there's no way of Knowing  
where you are going at night.  
dumb sacrifice and guilt's suspicion  
laugh an empty laughter of loss  
in the silence and the dark.  
and there's no understanding a martyr-  
one will only kill time,  
one's own time.

Shannon Elder





## New York City

Cold, icy crowds  
taking the streets by blocks, devouring  
the empty morning icy air  
cooling throats burnt by coffee,  
cigarettes, good-bye kisses,  
and all the unhealthy teeming foulness of breath  
is mouthwashed with each chill inhaling.

To be young in the city!  
Walking, swinging by, catching glimpses  
of a backward glance in storefront windows,  
the tail of a fashionable coat just flicking past  
in the whipping visions in the glass.  
Red lips shinging like a neon sign  
a block away, but a city block,  
not any other kind of distance can separate two people:  
more than a country mile, a city block.

As nightness steals upon the buildings,  
women gather in their smiles by the corners  
and draw their mouths closer, tighter in  
to draw off muggers.  
Purses clutched tighter in the grasping arms, thick with  
coat and package,  
but, underneath, city-thin and pasty white  
like the face behind the city soot.

City night-people, chipping off of building corners  
like flakes of sooty dandruff. Wearing red and other  
neon colors  
to match their fluorescent eyes and neon smiles.  
Held together by transparent tubes, the city-dwellers  
glow under streetlight,  
ghoulish, strained visions of half-people living the mechanical  
lives of the city.  
Only in the discos is there a fake kind of sparkle,  
a glitter, a half-naked glance  
that only suggests an inner functioning.  
Meanwhile, the clothing parts and comes together  
with red flashings, but lined with black  
like the mouths of the smoking dancers.

*(cont.)*

In the morning, yet another city  
rises resurrected out of last night's ashes.  
The street sweeper walks along and gathers up  
the dusty fragments of those who danced  
the night before.

Leslie Wells

### **A Better Place**

The road glistens under a  
midnight street light. Rain  
and damp seeping through the  
folds of a torn nylon windbreaker.  
Headlights blare past hollow  
eyes and upturned thumb  
while the moon shines through  
the mist like a pale blue  
thought.  
Grabbing his faded Army/Navy  
duffel bag, he silently stalks  
the empty bypass. Each step  
a milestone as he moves further  
from home.  
Clouds engulf the moon  
and he slips into a private  
world, where reality and  
responsibility have died  
and apathy is  
God.

F. A. Straley





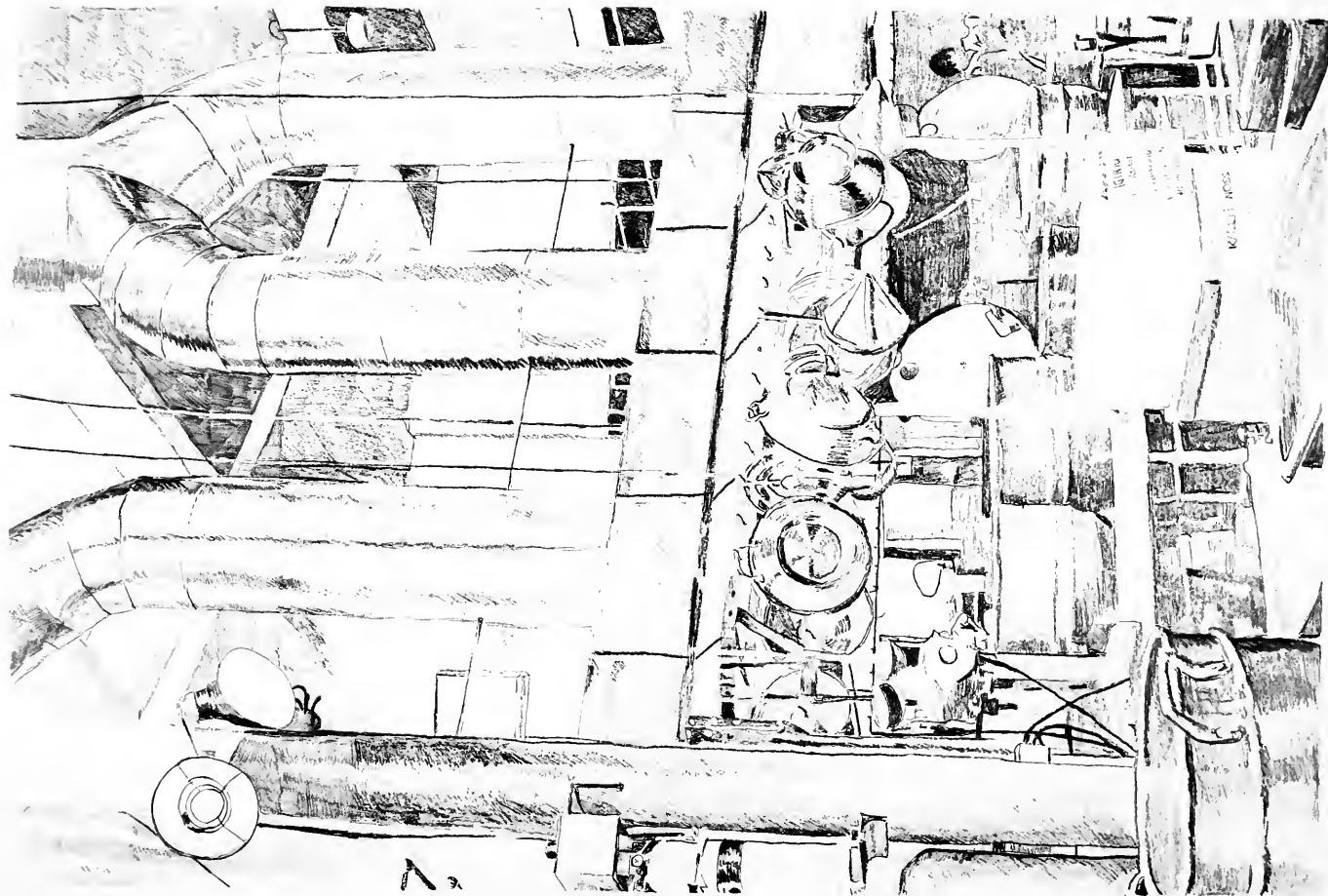
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F. A. Straley





The ant-stings of the winter wind on the youngster's  
Skin became simply an inconvenience when  
Snowmen beckoned him into their whitened kingdom  
Of rambling lanes of cream channeled by sled runners;  
Piling mounds of weapons, he engaged in combat  
By launching white missiles, snowy Roman candles,  
Sometimes being the victim of the icy bombs:  
The numbing dampness was scarcely ever noticed.  
The glistening, laden limbs of giant timbers  
Turned into a hamlet of gray and white phantoms  
As the boy skimmed and careened on the snow dunes.

The polar blast slowed a bit as it searched the ridges  
Of the old man's brow, and, pulling his coat more tightly  
Around himself, he turned his back against that cold breath.

Robert Graves

Come with your beauty bared, with ornate apparel  
Shed (it only serves to hide your elegant form).  
Now, to embrace, the sounds from your lips draw me  
closer,  
Leading my tongue to search for some way to please.

Teasingly, slowly making your ways apparent,  
Starting a rhythm, you suddenly change,  
And pause, but only to intensify what follows.

Thinking of others you have embraced before me  
(Especially the one called the *Lady of Cambridge* )  
I am refreshed by thoughts of pleasures yet unexposed.

Robert Graves

Time's stealthy progress  
Holds no Terrors for Me.  
I know Death: each  
Morning's sun and every

Evening's shadows; each  
Minute ticking past - - -Hands  
Swinging like some slow  
Scythe through weed-stalks - - -these

Are known to Me;  
And yet - - -I consider Time  
To be a Helix  
Of semi-precious stones.

Ron Baker

(Young  
Woman  
lays  
Sleep  
Still.)

Falling through  
an opening in  
leaves  
unswept by unwind  
A tree syphons breath from Earth  
new thawed:  
her breast rises  
rivers tighten  
rain screams in an astringent storm of gushing waters. Forth  
a tired sparrow articulates  
two lifted wings  
spires from nest to air.

(Young  
Woman  
reveille.)

Lisa Graziose







been up so many nights i know  
just when the birds will wake up  
and exactly when the sun is going to follow  
and after that the first sparse traffic  
school is alarms and crackling of am clockradios

the weather turned sour just to spite me and the trees

it's saturdaynight at some sterile motel  
the conversationdim to my ears but dense  
guided emotions defy gravity  
glide and fade still only half-formed  
half-told  
i have seen the furniture in this room  
a hundred times in a hundred places  
and no matter how it's arranged or  
what's outside the strategically-placed window  
it's a dentist's waiting room with the wind  
whistling in my ears true--  
i don't understand all the sudden ferment all  
the pillars you'd built yourself on suddenly  
cave in and there you are  
buried in the rubble without a map.  
been in a constant state of running out of cigarettes  
and excuses  
her it is saturdaynight in D. C. and just  
when i really need it the radio won't play anything  
i want to sing to  
all the years i've spent feeling the air  
deciphering the maze . . . someone said  
it's blowing in the wind  
i once knew a man who never missed the dawn  
he used to go outside just before the traffic part and feel  
the air but somehow he was killed  
trying to miss a dog

Jeannette Smith

## LOVE

He had created all that was in the first book,  
and they had committed the sin.  
During the first dark winter the trees were bare,  
and the ground was cold and hard.  
The old grass straggled dead out of the brown hillocks,  
and the rivers were black with mud.  
Shivering in the damp air, and  
Staring forlornly at the heavy sky,  
the animals, and the first people, huddled  
in their crude shelters, prepared for another grey rain;  
but He said,  
*Let there be snow.*

Devin

## Intercourse

tongue touching lip licking wetness - -  
fresh river water  
swelled in my head,  
a small, rippling pool:  
recalling images of the dream I'd had;  
you'd had;  
we both had, curiously,  
marvelously brought to life  
as we roll in the rain-drenched mirror  
of your wet windowpanes.

sweet lover-  
you took my breath away.

Linda Capaldi



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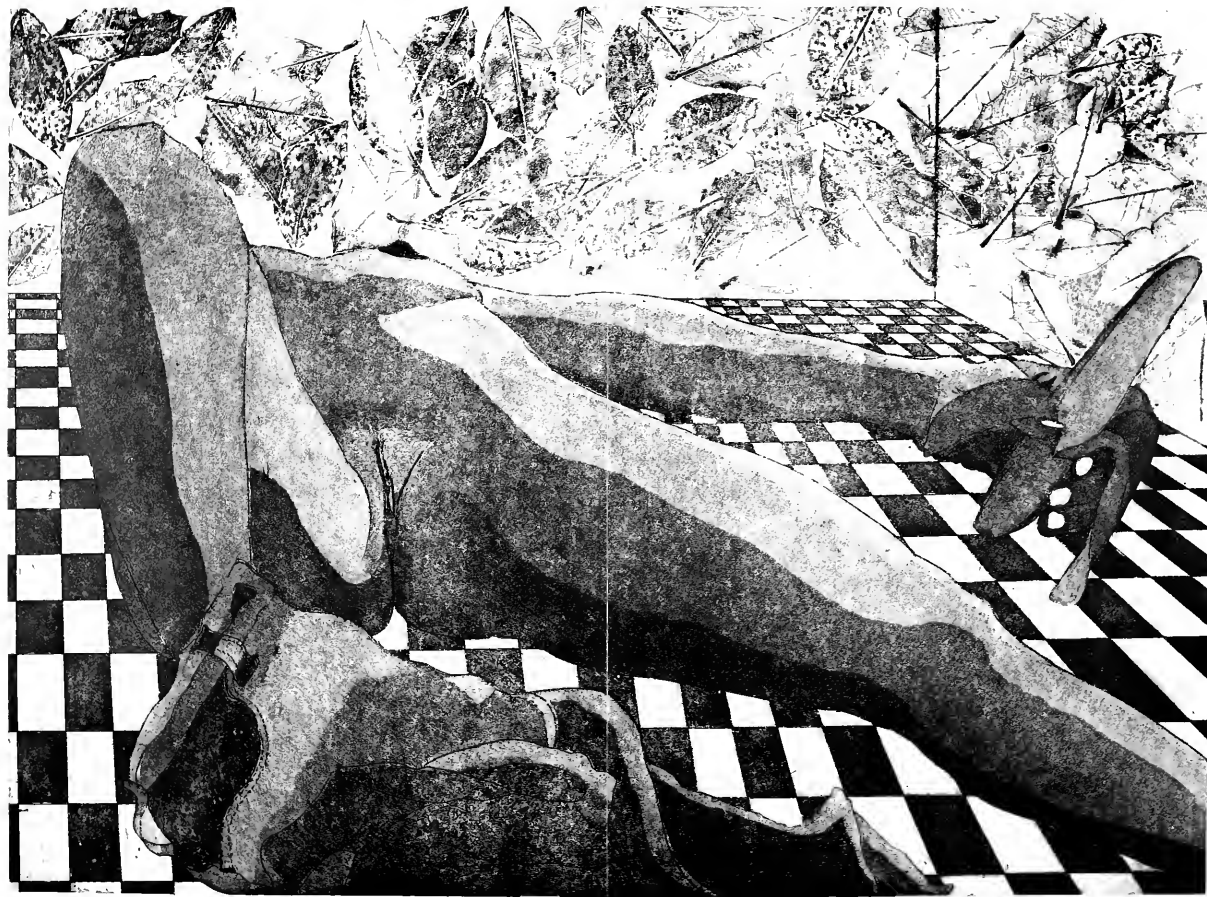
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One bright summer afternoon, Charley Mitchell opened his eyes and saw nothing, because his tired, old eyes could no longer discern the boundaries between the white walls and the white ceiling. Fear struck at his heart as he lay deep in the white mattress under the white sheets. am i there? he wondered. am i finally there? Suddenly he realized he could not remember where it was that he was going. i had a goal once, he thought. what was it? i was trying to find something, last i can remember. something i lost . . . or something maybe i never had. i think it was something i never had. but what was it?

i was trying to find a place, Charley thought. i was trying to get somewhere. i think it was i who was lost. Figures dressed in white drifted in and out of the room where he lay, discernible to the old man only as brief spots of motion as they fell across his line of vision. yes, yes, it was i who was lost. i was trying to find . . . trying to find my way. i was trying to find my way to. . .

All he knew was that suddenly there was fire. All around him red flames flickered and burnt, and Charley Mitchell was seized by a panic worse than any he had ever felt in all his five years. Then he knew also that he must get out; and the knowledge that there was fire, and the knowledge that he must get out were so great that his small brain contained nothing else. He thrashed through the flames to the side of the car, and alternately kicked at and tried to pull the door handle. After a few very long seconds a well-placed kick succeeded in knocking the door open, and the small body tumbled out and began to run. Three times Charley fell, but he reached a safe distance and turned around in time to see the huge ball of fire that finished the old vehicle. At that moment his mind cleared, and all the little bits of knowledge that had been crowded out came rushing back in. "Mommy!" he screamed. "Daddy!" He tried to run back towards the site of destruction, but a hand grasped his arm. Charley tried and tried, but he couldn't get any closer. The car disappeared into the flames.

What followed was unclear. The man who grabbed his arm took him someplace; he forgot where. Many people came to see him, and then they took him to a place they called home. Many children lived at this home, empty children's faces that he could not remember, little boys' names that he never knew, young people he couldn't remember talking to. Except for Gabriel Michaels. Gabriel Michaels was big and strong. Gabriel Michaels asked his name.

WHO ARE YOU? charles mitchell. HOW OLD ARE YOU? five. WHERE ARE YOU FROM? i — i guess i don't know. ARE YOU FROM ANYWHERE? well, yeah, i guess so. DON'T BE. what? ONCE YOU COME HERE YOU CAN'T GO BACK. GOT THAT? yes. GOOD. WHERE ARE YOU NOW? i am here. ARE YOU? yes, yes, i am. REMEMBER THAT. REMEMBER TO BE. MAKE YOUR BEING KNOWN. AND YOU WON'T GET NO HASSLE.

That Charley remembered. Whenever the other children tried to say that Charley was not, he made sure they knew that he was. The learning hurt everybody. At five, life was pain.

that was not where i was trying to get, he realized. i was looking for someplace else.

Charley Mitchell stayed in that home for days, months, years. Then he went to live with two strangers who came to see him once. In six months he learned to call them "ma" and "pa". They told him to call them that. They put him in a school because, they told him, education was a road that would take him someplace; he forgot where. So he learned, because he had to go.

i was trying to get somewhere. i had a goal. am i there yet? i have to remember where i was trying to go. maybe then i can try again. i don't think i'm there yet, but it seems so close. i have to remember what it was.

The brilliant whiteness was slowly giving way to a light grey so that the room began to feel like a different place, but Charley Mitchell could not remember having moved. He still lay deep in the now darkening mattress, under the perceptibly greying sheets. The wrinkles on his forehead deepened as he lay trying to remember. i was on a journey. i was trying to get somewhere. i still must get there, but where is it? where was it?

It was a long road. The university he went to on his adopted parents' money lay somewhere behind him, lost in the mist. He graduated with honors. School was over. Still, he was nowhere.

He went home to live with "ma" and "pa" for a month after graduation, looking for an acceptable, respectable job. His adopted parents held a party to celebrate the occasion. Many of their adopted friends came to congratulate him. "Congratulations," said one such friend. "You're finally there."

"Where am I?" Charley Mitchell asked.

"Why, in the world, son," the man told him. "In the real world."

"Where is that, though?" But the man drifted off to refill his empty martini glass.

but i was looking for somewhere else. that was not where i was trying to get at all.

For weeks Charley drifted between cocktail parties and job applications and interviews. The world consisted of people telling him, "Congratulations. You're finally there," "Sorry, we can't use you," and "Maybe there will be an opening at some later time, but now. . ." Life was pain at twenty-two.

"Ma and Pa," he said one day, "I don't belong here. Thanks for everything you've done for me, but I'm afraid I've been misplaced. I have to find my way home."

He walked eternities on the long highways, carrying nothing but what he earned for himself at small, part-time jobs. Millions of cars passed him. Once in a while one stopped to give him a ride.

"Where are you going, son?" the drivers asked.

"I don't know," Charley Mitchell answered.

They dropped him off at the next crossroad, the next town, the next toll stop. Charley picked up little jobs: lawn mowing, wood chopping, hours of greasy counter waiting — the kind of jobs he had taken in high school when they told him he was not yet qualified for anything else. He bought cheap food. Sometimes he bought new clothing. Often he bought alcohol. He never stayed long. Charley Mitchell had to move on.



One night, when he was sitting wasted on the steps of a poor tenement building, a big and strong man stopped and peered into his face.

CHARLEY? CHARLEY MITCHELL? he's not in, man. CHARLEY. DO YOU REMEMBER ME? no. i remember no-one. LISTEN TO ME, CHARLEY. YOU KNOW ME. no. no, i don't. gabriel michaels doesn't exist anymore. YOU'RE WRONG. I AM, I WAS, I WILL BE AGAIN. no . . . no. WHERE ARE YOU FROM, CHARLEY? a ho-no. from nowhere. ARE YOU? yes. yes, i think so. CHARLES, YOU HAVE NOT BEEN. YOU MUST BECOME.

that was not it. i did not get there yet. i must find my way. i have to find my way home. it's getting late, and i have to go home.

The old man opened his eyes, and saw nothing. A dark shadow seemed to enshroud him; there was nothing but deep grey. Occasional figures moved about in the gloom. From far away, a cold, tired, female voice drifted within range of his hearing. "Is everything all right, Mr. Mitchell?"

i'm lost. i seem to have lost my way.

"What was that, Mr. Mitchell? You must speak up."

"There's nothing you can do," the old man croaked.

"Whatever you say, Mr. Mitchell."

Charley began to tire of his search. Nothing was familiar. He had an extremely vague memory of something before the home, but nothing ever resembled it; and he began to think it was not that which he sought after. One small city was impersonal enough not to drive him away; one job was respectable enough to satisfy his diminishing sense of worth. He acquired a savings account, and put away a little money. Someday, maybe, it would help him find his way home, he thought. There he stayed for a long time.

but that was not the place i was going to. i left to find it again. i must have, because i am no longer there, and i know there is something i'm looking for.

Once, after having drunk for awhile, Charley Mitchell talked to a young man who worked where he did. The man wanted to talk about money. After discussing what each had been making and how much each had put away, he said to Charley, "I was thinking: How nice it would be to set my own hours. How nice it would be not to have anybody tell me what to do. Wouldn't that be nice?"

"I don't know."

"I thought about you. I thought, a nice, quiet fellow who minds his own business, he would find that nice, too. Then I thought, you and me, we know a lot about running a shop. We know more than we get credit for. Don't you agree?"

He and Charley set up a shop. The young man ran it himself. He called Charley partner, but Charley just worked there. He had stopped looking. One day he heard the young man talking to a friend, "I don't really know him at all personally," he heard him say, "but he's a good business partner. He never asks any questions. We make a profit." Charley was quietly drunk, and he didn't think about it again for a long time.

that was not it. that was not what i was looking for at all. i was still nowhere. but now, here. how did i get here? Charley Mitchell lay in the darkness, wondering. He could see nothing; all around him was black. i never found it. where is it? and how did i get here? oh, yes. . .

Charley sat in the little office dumbfounded. He had found a kind of peace and security in this world of minding his own business. He never thought of it changing on him. He never thought of getting old. The younger partner was talking to him, and his words struck fear in his heart.

"Look, Chuck," he was saying, "It's been nice. It really has. But I'm afraid we can't use you anymore. Yes, I know you're half owner, but you'd get your fair share of the dividends. What I'm saying is, well, don't you think it's time you retire?"

Charley leaned forward because he had trouble with his hearing. "What was that?"

"I said, well, Chuck, don't you think it's time you retire?"

"I don't know."

"Where can you go?"

"I don't know."

"I know that it's a problem, old man, but I'll tell you what. You just turn over your half of the business, and I'll put you in this real nice home. I'll make sure you're well taken care of. I know a place you'll really like. Nobody will bother you; you can mind your own business. Hey, it's a really nice place. They'll treat you like a god. I checked into it really well. Only the best for my business partner right? What was that? Speak up, man."

"I said . . . I thought i was going someplace."

"Well, you are, you are . . . The best place you've ever been. Just tell me when you're ready. I'll take you there myself."

but this is not it. this is not the place i wanted to go at all. i've been here too long. life is pain when you're an old man. i have to go. i've been here too long, but i'm trapped. no wonder i couldn't get there. but i won't stay here. i don't belong here. i feel i'm very close. i'll leave. i'll get there tonight, i know it.

Charley saw a big and strong figure in front of him.

HAVE YOU CEASED TO BE, CHARLES? no. no, i am. ARE YOU? well, yes. yes, i am. CHARLES, MAKE YOU BEING KNOWN. they know i'm here. WHO KNOWS? they who are. I AM WHO IS. you know my being. CHARLES, BE. i am. BE, CHARLES. I am. BE. I AM. WHO ARE YOU? I AM WHO AM. TAKE LIFE FREELY, CHARLES. SURELY I COME QUICKLY. SO BE IT. COME, CHARLES MITCHELL.

One dark summer night, Charley Mitchell closed his eyes and saw.

Amy R. Sanderson

## Garden Wedding

### I

I wait behind the boxwood, to the strains  
of Moonlight Sonata. August slowly tallows  
into summer's eldest daughter, like a rose  
open to its fullest, just before the petals  
drop.

Forsythia fingers reach to hold me, shredding  
spiked light on murmurs of *Seems like only  
yesterday-* and *My, but hasn't she bloomed!*  
and on my eyes, shining like dewdrops on the blossom of my  
face.

(My dress, with rustling cream caress, touches  
the old slate path--where I practiced handstands,  
and, became Scarlett or National Velvet or even  
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm--and gathers bits of  
dirt.)

I float on the fragrance of the flowers that frame my face  
towards our portico-turned-alter--the one  
where I received my very first kiss . . .  
Giving myself away to others, petal by  
petal.

### II

I see the mailbox at the end of our tree-lined lane,  
wooden, rich with honeysuckle. Ours will be metal,  
naked and cold, and my letters will come by someone  
else's name. It will take years for the honeysuckle to  
grow.

Next to my flannel shirts, flannel shirts,  
in a closet that mixes the traces of roses and rum,  
herbs and English Leather. Time will pass  
and the differences merge, and soon it will all be the  
same.

(cont.)

(A woman hot in the sun reminds me of mothering—  
all sweat accompanied by a reconciled smile.  
Does she sit with him by the fire on blue-black nights,  
their eyes sparkling across cocoa? Or do they just  
sit?)

Mellow yellow years stretch before me,  
fading and funneling inward like daffodils.  
A voice (over static) once said that love is a rose—  
but what if I should venture one twilight to find it  
weathered?

### III

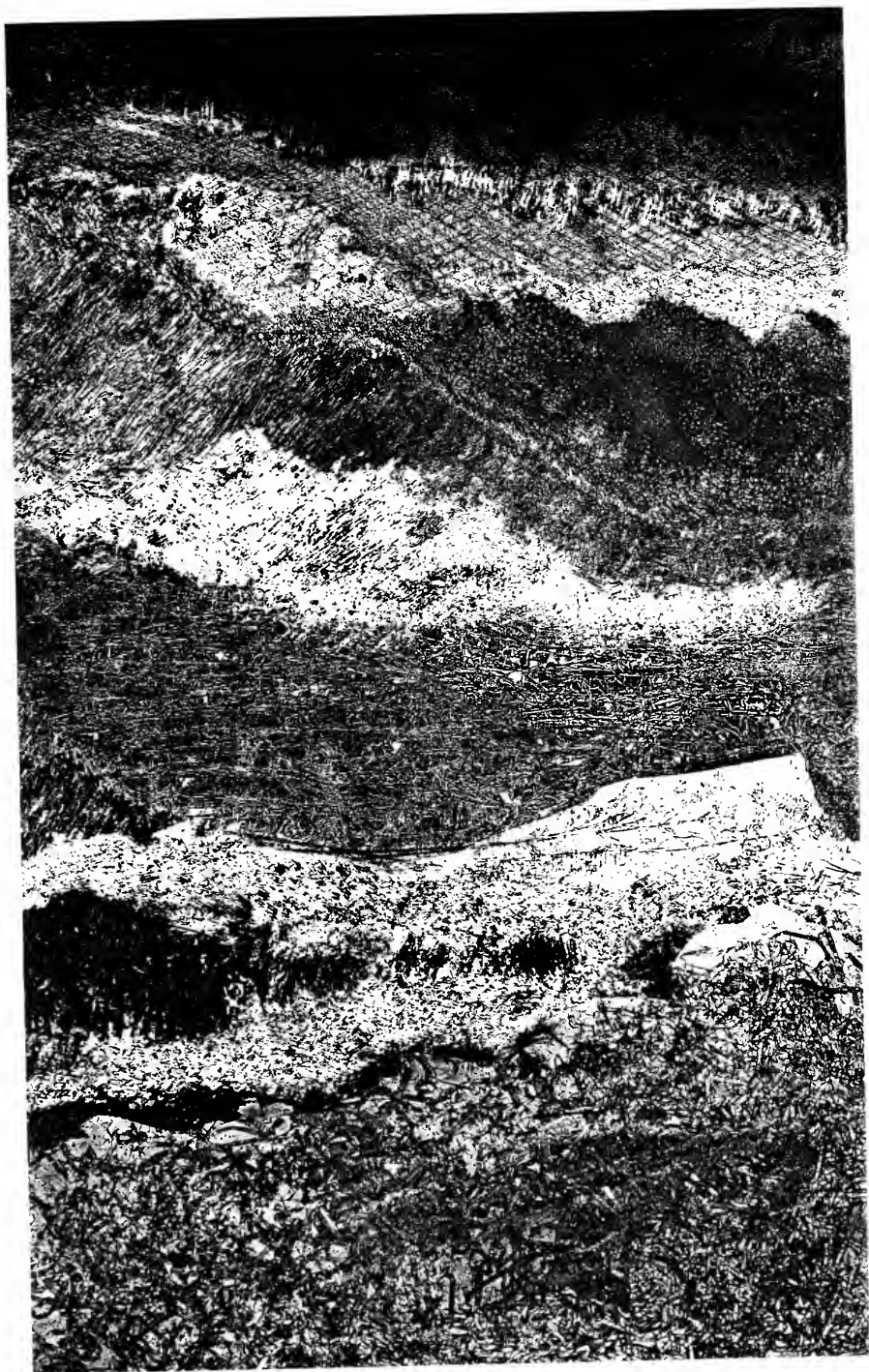
Like a thirsty flower my senses drink in the moment,  
selecting each enticement, like spices from shelves.  
Quivering thoughts tickle my lips, words  
budding into sound, spilling into the electric  
air.

Latticed glass opens into Ever-Ever Land,  
and I toss my bouquet to a field of upturned daises—  
the girls that I used to be. The tips of the ivy  
which curl about the window are new and untried and reaching like  
me.

(A bee hums by my ear. A grain of pollen  
falls from his foot as his wings fan my face,  
disturbing a strand of hair. The hum races  
over my skin, flowing and growing and filling me with  
life.)

We will build a wooden mailbox, with nails and laughter,  
and make love in clean sweat, pressing  
on cool green blades, bathed in honeysuckle, getting  
grass stains on our moist skin. We will fill our house with  
flowers.

Tutt Stapp













Mary S. Cote



Susan Smith



## The Country Dump Maid

She lay, as cats in gutted chevys slept,  
As rats squealing left their dead in trash fields,  
A blue-eyed boy reloading quick his gun.

She lay, as fusty smoke sniffed out her chair,  
As flies by hundreds rubbed their fists,  
A blooded rat's side split by twenty-twos.

She lay, as if the guard salted sharp,  
As generals stooped and bowed uncovered heads,  
A gun salute to open ears for dead.

Rain gently fell to smother out the chair,  
While a wakened mating cat sustained his life,  
And wet upon her cheeks meandered down.

Rain gently fell for sake of cats and rats,  
While fists that burned the city's trash laid still,  
And still sides lay into her sunken couch.

Rain gently fell, a brightest sun o'er head,  
While kneeled disciples folded hands in prayer,  
And senses shuddered high on from the rain.

Rain gently fell upon the country dump maid,  
She lay, as cats in gutted chevys slept,  
A blue-eyed boy reloading quick his gun.

S.M. Newman

## Bretton Woods

The village was deserted as the carriage started on its way. I thought the quiet most strange, as the morning sun had been up for hours. Not many a morn went by when the shopkeepers didn't open their doors to waiting patrons. And such a fine day, too! It was a rather warm morning at the end of July—the 28th, I believe. The sun shone strongly down on the village below, and few large places of shade could easily be secured. I rejoiced inwardly at the beautiful weather. A perfect day for traveling, I reasoned. Yes, a truly fine day it was indeed.

I was on my way to Bretton Woods to spend the remaining portion of the summer at my Uncle's estate. He had long ago invited me for a holiday, but it was only now that I was permitted to go. My mother and father thought it too soon that I, as a young woman, venture out alone on this journey. "It is not proper," I remember my mother saying only last season.

Excitement welled within me as I thought of seeing my Uncle again. Years had passed since we last saw each other, and I could not formulate a picture of him in my mind. I hoped I would be able to recognize him. It had been a long while, and I was such a young girl then, withdrawn and very much alone. Those years away at school have matured me enormously. I do hope Uncle will be pleased with me. He always did say I resembled my mother's sister. He must be terribly lonely, his wife having died just last year. Living all alone in that large, old house, he must desire some companionship. Certainly he lives well and does have his servants. But dear Mrs. Wheaton, I heard, is no longer able to attend to him as she used to, and has now moved to her sister's home. Uncle Justin needs love and attention that only a loving relative can provide. I resolved in my mind, then, to stay the summer and on into the fall if I found my presence needed. I vowed to be the friend my uncle surely so desperately needed. Justin had mentioned, in his last letter written in the early spring, that his brother Matthew, may be visiting also this summer.

The thudding of the horses on the dust brought me back to the present. We had been on our way now for only a few hours. It would not be till the late evening when I would finally reach my destination. I lay my head on the leather interior and attempted to sleep. I hoped that a long nap would make the traveling a bit shorter and not quite so tiring. But the carriage jostled me so, that I found it hard to relax.

The sun was shining its brightest now, and not even the tiniest breeze made its way across my seat. I found it increasingly difficult to breathe in the sticky heat, and moved closer to the air outside. It feels so good to rest my eyes, I thought, as I lay my head back. So good . . .

I must have slept for quite a while. The sun had moved from its position overhead and was now on my right, seeming to follow the carriage. Scanning the trees and fields as we rode past reminded me of games I used to play as a child. The sun teasingly played hide-and-seek with the carriage, peeking out every once in a while to assure me of its presence. The trees appeared bold and overpowering from the small carriage. . . I glanced upward in an attempt to find the tops of these huge pillars of green. Every few moments, I could see sunlight filtering through the mass—each ray trying, most in vain, to pierce through this shield and touch the dust below. Tiny spots of yellow on the road gave testimony of those which had made it. These were the successful ones—the winners in this game of nature.

I could not help noticing the silence that filled the air. It is peculiar, I thought, that there aren't heard the sound of birds or the rustling of the trees as the faint breeze touched their top branches. A still day it was, yet there was something definitely in motion in the air. It was a sense of tension, as if the world were waiting for something. Waiting for something to happen. I shuddered, then, at my own realization of this arrested state of nature, and of my own discomfort. Surely it was my own imagination. Father did often chide me as a child that I would imagine myself into my own death. Yet, now I was not alone in my fear. The horses which pulled the carriage were hesitating and were slowing down their pace. They refused to go on, in spite of the insistent commands of the driver. Suddenly, I became aware of what had provoked their fright.

An old man had stepped abruptly in front of the carriage, and refused to let us continue. He was not a large man, by any means, but something in his eyes held power that size could not match. The man's jacket was tattered, and the knees were out of his pants. He was very shabbily dressed. A beggar, I thought. His feet were bare and caked with filth, the hair on his head had grown to an uncontrollable length, and one could only guess at his last visit to a barber. Grayish-brown whiskers hung from his small, bony chin, the ends of which were broken off and dried. As he spoke, I noticed there were no teeth left in his mouth. Probably a luxury of long ago. It was not his physical appearance which held me, but the fire which filled the pupils of his eyes. I did not want to look at this man, yet I was unable to look away.

"Do not pass any further," he said. "Peril awaits you at the next encounter with men."

"Get away from her, you old drunkard," the driver told him, as he poked him with the tip of his whip. The horses were commanded to move. Cautiously, and ever so slowly, they began to walk. The old man would not let them pass, and held on to their reins.

"Please, I beg of you. Do not take the lady any further. You must not let her see what they have done. Go back now!"

"Out of my way! I'll give you no more warnings," the driver roared. "You must let our horses go. Step aside at once! What, are you mad?"

The driver then cracked his whip and the horses moved on. The man was thrown down onto the dusty road, as the horses began to trot forward. The old man, not to be outdone, quickly jumped to his feet and grasped frantically at the door of the carriage.

"Please Miss! You are not welcome there. Do return home at once; I am pleading with you."

*(cont.)*

I shrank back into the carriage as his hands reached inside the door. He was trying to grab me. He was trying to hold me back with him and prevent me from journeying any further. Was he mad? Surely he must be. What could there possibly be waiting for me at my uncle's? And how would this wretched beggar know anything of my destination or of myself? I tried to pass it off as irrational ramblings made by an old deranged man. Yet it bothered me.

Dusk was upon us as we neared my uncle's house. I noticed how sweet the air smelled, and how joyously the birds were singing in the trees. Large weeping willows caressed the carriage as we passed beneath them, like long, fragile fingers gently holding us, just for a moment. They searched the carriage, and then, finding nothing amiss, let us pass.

I saw the faint glow of a lamp through the trees and deduced that I was, at long last, nearing my journey's end. I could hear the barking of Justin's hounds, alerting the occupants within of approaching visitors. Anticipation welled within me as we pulled up to the front gates, still as stately and not quite as forbidding, as I remembered those gates to be.

There it sat. The huge house I remembered from my previous visit. Yet, it had changed somewhat, grown a littler older, faded a bit, and the grass and shrubbery needed the touch of a gardener. Surely Mr. Winslow, the old caretaker, was still here. He did so love his work and took special care of his plants. Perhaps he has been ill, and has not had time to work outdoors. I planned to ask my uncle about him. Nevertheless, the house looked inviting.

I was met at the front door by Agathe, the head housekeeper and a woman I had not met. She bid me hello and took from me my bag and bonnet.

"How was your trip, Miss?" she queried.

"Oh, it was a fine ride, but I am a bit weary after the many hours on the road," I replied.

"I'll draw a nice warm bath for you, and you can freshen up before dinner. Your uncle will join you then."

She took my things up to my room. I followed her, carefully taking in every detail of the old house. It seemed very dark as we made our way up the stairs. Justin used to insist on sunlight, as I recall. He, as my mother often told me, abhorred the darkness. Could it be, I thought, he has changed? People do usually over a number of years.

My room was located at the far end of the hall. There was plenty of space, a nice large bed, and a balcony with a beautiful view of the garden. How splendid, I thought. This is where I shall spend some of my time; perhaps do a little reading.

After a bath that eased my tense muscles and spirits, I went downstairs. As the study door was ajar, I peeked in. It appeared to be empty, so I decided to do a bit of exploring. There was little light, but I could see there were numerous books ranging in subject from law to horse breeding. I never realized what an avid reader my uncle was!

I fingered some of the books; a few I opened. Dust covered them, so I reckoned they had not been opened in a long while. At the end of the shelves, was my uncle's pipe collection. He had pipes of all shapes and sizes. Some looked to be from as far away as the Orient. One of the pegs on the rack was empty, and I became curious as to which one my uncle was now using.

I heard the summons to dinner, and made my way to the dining room. The halls were extremely dark, giving them an eeriness I had never experienced before. The brightness of the dining room contrasted sharply with the dingy halls, and it took me a moment to adjust my eyes. My uncle came into the dining room and over to me. He took my hands in his, and looked at me warmly.

"I'm so glad you have arrived safely." He smiled.

"I want us to spend much of our time together—just as we used to."

I thanked him and told him how pleased and grateful I was for his inviting me. We then sat down to dinner.

He had changed somewhat. Over the past years, he had grown a bit thinner, and his hair was much curlier than I remember. I also noticed that he was much shorter. Of course, I was a child then, and people do change over time; especially ten years. Looking at myself, I realized I was not the same person I was then and would be probably and equally surprised upon meeting myself in a few years. I had a certain feeling for my uncle when I was a child, and I could not help noticing how I no longer felt the same way towards him. He no longer seemed to be the Justin I knew as a child. I was puzzled. We have a lot to relearn about each other, I laughed.

Dinner passed rather quickly. My uncle made conversation, but I was wonderful and somewhat disappointed that we hadn't really talked. I had so longed to reminisce and hear those famous tales of his early life. I knew those could never change. I remember him as an avid storyteller, and was so looking forward to hearing some of his fascinating remembrances. When I questioned him about it, he said he was tired and would satisfy my ears with one the next day. He then excused himself, and retired to his room.

I spent the remainder of the evening pondering the day's activities. I knew it was a bit premature, but I had a deep feeling that my visit here with Justin would not prove to be as enjoyable as I had previously believed. I made my way upstairs by the dim light of a single candle. The shadows it cast on the walls made me shiver. This house is so cold and removed. It needs some living in—some joy. I missed the cheery touch of my Aunt then. The house lacked human touch. I hoped that in the morning, with the aid of the warm sun, the house would pick up in happiness. I resolved to be as cheery as possible, and after a good night's rest, I felt confident I could again regain the closeness I once had with my uncle. I made myself ready for bed, climbed beneath the cool linen, and remembered nothing more.

The birds were singing cheery songs outside my window. I lay in my bed, enjoying the solitude of the early morn. Agathe came in presently, and opened the curtains. Rays of sun fell across the room like heavy timbers of wood. I felt bathed in the warmth.

*(cont.)*

At breakfast, I learned my uncle had gone away for the better part of the day, and would not be returning home till nightfall. He had to make a trip to a nearby town to take care of some pressing legal matters. Fortunately, he would be here for dinner, and he did promise to tell me stories today. My desire to with him would not go unfulfilled. I thus spent most of the day walking in the garden and sitting on the balcony, watching the birds glide across the front lawn. I really must remember to ask Justin of Mr. Winslow.

Suddenly, in the late afternoon, as if out of nowhere, dark, hovering clouds moved in and huge drops of rain began to patter on the ground. I was amazed at the quickness of the storm, and proceeded to get myself inside. I managed to be in the house before the rain completely soaked me through. How peculiar, I thought. The storm just moved in from nowhere.

Evening was rapidly falling on Bretton Woods. The sun could be seen sinking behind the trees, the moon, a full one at that, was high over the house, already taking the place of the sun before its complete sinking. I began to ready myself for dinner; still anticipating the conversation my uncle and I were to have later that night. Perhaps we could bring out the pictures of long ago and share some of their memories.

Justin returned just prior to dinner and quickly went upstairs to ready himself. I watched from the door of my room as he made his way down the hall. His clothes were dusty, and in his hands he clutched a mass of papers. The big oaken door of his room closed behind him as he entered, concealing his actions and insuring his privacy.

At dinner, Justin told us an amusing tale of the goings on in the nearby town of Willingsboro.

“And the young boy tried to get me to buy a package of his fine tobaccos.

I actually felt quite sorry for him—such a wretched looking little fellow. ‘But son,’ I said. ‘What would do with a package of your tobacco? I’ve never inhaled a puff in my life!’ I left the boy standing on the street corner, looking as bewildered as ever.”

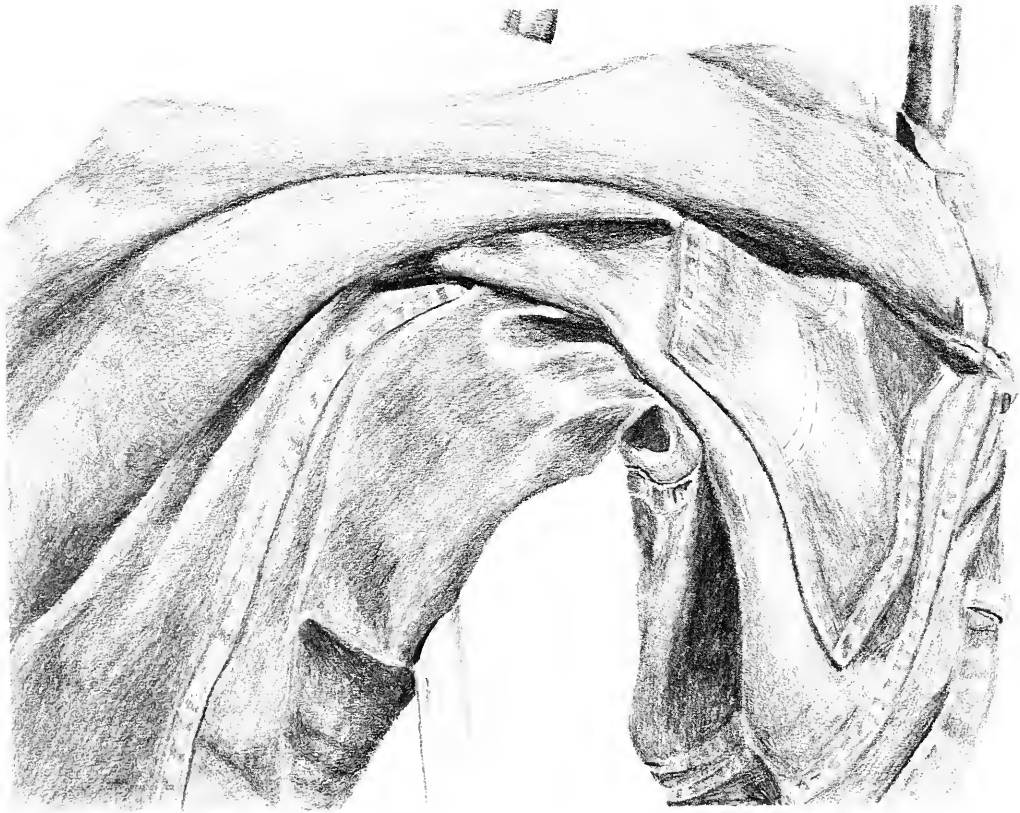
He laughed heartily then and rang for the dishes to be cleared.

I was overwhelmed. Justin did not smoke? Why all of the pipes then? I know he did when I was a child—he used to blow smoke rings in front of my face to amuse me. As I was about to question him about his last statement, he rose from the table and announced he was retiring for the evening. His leaving upset me terribly. Yes, he bade me a good night, but had hardly said a word in my favor and direction throughout the meal. Was I not invited to spend some weeks here in the company of my uncle? Had I known I would be spending them alone, I doubt I would have made such a journey. The old man on the side of the road had been correct after all. There was trouble here. I felt myself foolish for remembering the words of a silly old beggar, yet they bothered me.

I resolved to leave early the next day if a carriage could be arranged. Plans of a fond vacation had filled my mind earlier in the month, but now my disillusionment was hard to bear. Yes, the only possible solution is to return home as soon as it can be arranged.







I was jolted out of dilberation by a hard clap of thunder. A storm had again moved in, and I heard the familiar pattering of rain outside. The hollow roar of the thunder put me in a frightened state. Oh, how I wished I were home! I wanted to be close to someone—anyone. I began to climb the dark steps to my room, planning to take refuge there.

As I was walking past the many doors to my room, I was overtaken by a burning curiosity as to what was contained behind those doors. As I was only to be here for a short while longer, I decided to investigate. The first room on the right looked to have been my aunt's. It had a large old bed, and her clothes still filled some of the bureau drawers. Upon seeing her clothes, I was again filled with the pleasant memories of the early days spent here. Those were pleasant days—far removed from grief and sorrow. I recalled the day she gave me my first rockinghorse. How I cried when it was time to leave and the horse must stay behind. The Rockinghorse! Would it still be here? My aunt had promised it would be waiting here for me on my next visit. Could it still be here after so many years?

I wanted badly to see the little horse I had spent countless hours playing on when I was last here. I was sure there was an attic in this old house. If only I knew how to get into it. I opened a few more of the doors on the hall, searching now for a passage to the attic. Hopefully a door to some of my past. The door in the far room led to another empty bedroom. As I was closing this door, I noticed a small wooden panel in one of the corner walls. This could very well be what I am looking for, I decided. I walked over to the small entrance and pushed forceably on it. It gave way easily. Someone had used it recently; it was evident.

The stairs leading from this panel were steep and very dark. The small, faint candle I held really did not put forth the light I needed to see. I was actually a bit fearful of venturing up into the darkeness alone, but I was drawn by something up there. It must be the horse. It really is still up there! My foot struck a large wooden box, and I almost fell into it in my surprise. It held only photos and some linen, now graying with age. I peered through the darkness, hoping to catch a glimpse of a wooden toy. My attention was caught by something in the corner. Yes, it was the horse! I could see the rockers now! In anticipation, I hurried over to it. But the candlelight gave picture to something other than a child's toy. I was completely unprepared for what met my eyes. There, in the corner of the attic, by the window, sat my uncle. He was, and had been, dead for quite some time. The pipe, which had been missing from the rack, lay next to him on the floor. All that remained of my uncle was seen in his pipe. Decay had taken everything else away. Into the darkness had gone all the laughter and life this man possessed. Into the darkness.

The sun filtered through the Venetian blinds, giving a spotlight effect to the dancing particles of dust in the air. I rolled over in my bed, hoping to catch a few more moments of sleep. I knew it was only a matter of minutes before the ringing of the alarm would beckon me. Just a little while longer. . . . .

Beth Lawrence

## The Classifieds

Wanted: A roommate without a vinyl raincoat  
who doesn't discuss the pizzas or the lovers  
he's had, doesn't run computers or participate  
in balloon bash, or take part in intergalactic  
fan clubs of any kind.

He should know poetry from Homer to Ginsberg.  
A father to words--not a publishing hound.  
No brays or barks among the University  
except in choice yips and golden bellows.  
No stooping to McDonald's mentality:  
in arch to arches, he must be clean,  
not pocked from pop-culture packs.

One who speaks truth; his own,  
not his favorite professor's.  
In fact will run his nails across the  
chalk board to see who's listening.  
If no one is, he shuts up.  
Why drag a dog from the kennel?

Why place yourself in the pack?  
Lone wolves will raise their cubs  
on mountain hillsides.  
Thoughts surface as poetry grown freer.

Nancy Maynard



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## Heart

Heart, shaken and worn, flailing  
on the verge of chaos and confusion.  
A sudden change, slight and unperceptable,  
and he slips off the edge and over  
into the chasm.  
Careening downward, Depression  
seizes hold and smothers him.  
Enfolding the heart like a quicksand blanket,  
until the butterfly of hope  
lifts him like a kite on a  
springtime breeze.

F. A. Straley

## Old Railriders Song

Faceless lost.  
sandwiched between floors  
cracked by ice-age dust  
and glass blurred cent views  
of lost face.  
Man of the holy stopwatch  
blue suited town crier  
home: is off schedule  
like prayers for deceased, deceased.  
Bodies like kissing pendulums  
touch and roll,  
to music of steel tracked  
grinding razor bladed  
diesel engines.  
They will today.  
They will tomorrow.  
Play cards  
take a smoke  
read newspapers  
by the dripping day light.

Night knows  
supper tables conversing with soup bowls  
cracked corning ware and lenox with yankee stainless  
television cops and robbers.  
Good guys                      bad guys  
in beds crisp and untouched  
in the push-pull of  
droplets from your dripping faucet.

But dollars  
fifty cent pieces  
Gucci loafers  
and one last Saturday night Schlitz  
makes muzak  
and antiseptic secretaries  
blend in a palette of  
Jackson Pollack hues.  
Harmony on the LIRR  
till hearts fall in arms of  
wives left cold by babes  
at schools for public poor.  
Then day.  
Then night.  
Tracks of ticket-punched tears bleed faces lost  
and graves made by  
empty coffee spoons  
and the moon.

Lisa Ann Graziose

played schoolgirl last century  
tuned up to a fine pitch of wanderlust  
so i spread my wings and soared into anything  
but my cloud-carpet was pulled out from under me  
a tailspin of blurred world  
my senses failing fall

i

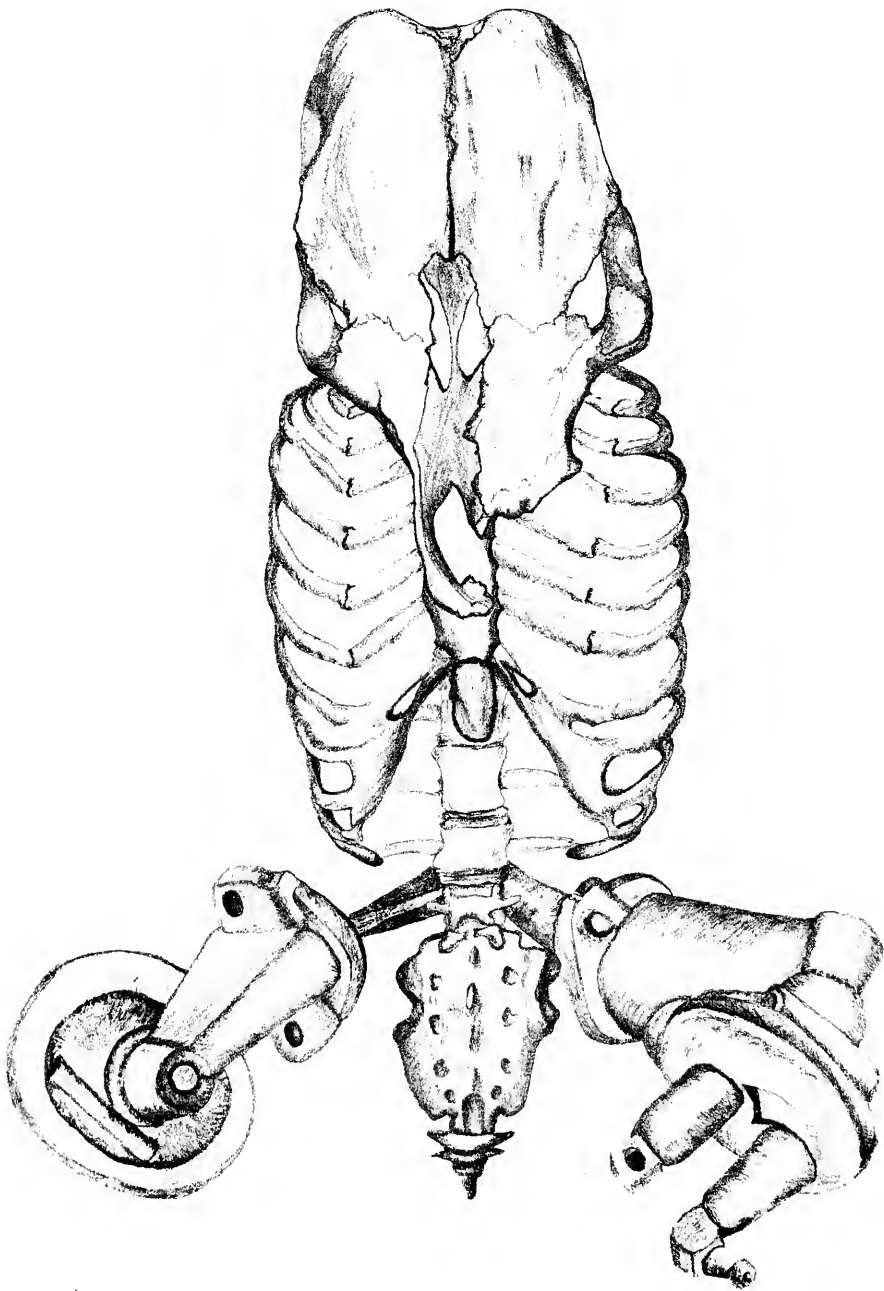
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g

into the sense  
lessstruggle  
to catch up with the world you somehow  
missed in the flurry  
maybe if you hurry--  
but don't look back  
or dare  
be sorry.

Jeannette Smith





## like objects

nothing  
is worth talking about;  
inside a piano,  
or a murdered whore.  
play a chord,  
she sings songs.  
dances dances.  
play a card,  
the game's last queen  
takes the trick away.

roll clipped within - music.  
*she'll be comin' round those mountains*  
*when it's springtime in her bloomers,*  
roll slipped within - make it.  
*i wish't i was cucumber,*  
*oh, shake it, don't break it!*

in the room, the men come . . .  
and go humming.

piano box, body box:  
what have you lost  
like objects long forgotten?  
you breathe the silence so beautiful  
that it moves magical,  
murmurs musical.  
your deaths are not  
like life, so rotten.

Shannon Elder

## Sitting Out Back

The morning blows cool,  
Dew fresh catching my sunned eyes,  
The frogs are quiet.

Slowly I sink down,  
Stooped fashion on the South's porch,  
Pond air closing up

To a mamosa,  
A dull bass in a long leap,  
Pink brush fur the bait.

*Wood's there to be chopped,  
Saw some boards this spring, maybe,  
Money's hard to keep.*

The old woman snores,  
Calls me son even asleep,  
Dragon fly hov'ring.

S. M. Newman

## Loved

The long loved looming moon rose round  
the steeped side of town and loved  
Lovers spoke softly to their dimmed  
shadows on the ground. To think they found  
the brighter side of life long yearned for  
in the tips of their fingers' mounds  
in the swirling print they call theirs  
from then on, and to think it was the moon  
gone from the sky that fooled them into love.

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S. M. Newman







all desire  
is for a memory of want

somewhere there is anguish-  
a region sparse and desolate,  
where a wish  
is a ghost desperate.

the rise  
of slopes  
is a recession of expectation  
rolling down,

like the wave  
that is not the wave,  
but the succession  
of a submerged personality-  
a subjective pattern,  
a formless farewell.

the guise  
of hope  
is a reaction to expression  
rehearsing mime,

like a name  
that is not a name,  
but the presence  
of a silent personality-  
echoing an echo,  
saluting the self.

somehow there is caution-  
a time forever present,  
when a motion  
pauses existent.

all experience  
is a recreation of life

Shannon Elder

a grated pattern  
shadows  
the countenance  
of  
a being  
not yet  
met,  
but I know  
so well

a brother  
so untouchable

for the sake of  
the welfare  
of our existences

let him free

his mind is free  
transcending  
the essence  
of the leaders  
to whom  
he  
must  
turn and bend

oh free his body  
from the shackles  
of his dwelling  
for years

his senses beg only  
the sweet  
kindness of the earth . . .  
the succulent earth

Beth Innis

heart

mine that flutters from  
within  
beating wildly  
enough  
to make my life tremble . . .  
a depressant

swallowed  
and  
swallowing my life  
to encircle  
my mind  
with  
the same flutters  
I've witnessed  
before  
witnesses  
seated with  
haunting eyes

softly, softly mutter  
and indicate that  
which  
must stand  
hidden

within

sipping oh so lingeringly  
on white wine

lulling the nectar  
with the whole self  
to let it seep  
and warm . . .

the draft  
within

Beth Innis

## **Where Will You Go How Will You Live**

where will you go how will you live  
hell if i know  
you do what you do  
how trite  
i know  
do you care  
hell no  
who does  
He does  
well shouldn't you  
i suppose so  
but i don't know  
why  
you just do  
i know.

Linda Capaldi





## Ascetic Wreck

(a recreation of Gerard Manley Hopkins's  
*The Wreck of the Deutschland*)

Ah . . . grief, but I hope blessed that stark claws cling  
discerning the green-marine-round.  
a gathering, an in-moving-outer-ring  
of self-full waves wanting softest sound.  
Truth is strand strewn  
from this fast, sordid, swirling mound  
heard by our manless moon  
from shivering string.

Fall from vain to the vast sun flash light!  
A heavy hurl, a stunned start . . .  
that waves and reels fro, from freed to fright.  
Is *yes* a set or changeful chart --  
a leaf on sea adrift  
and deep drain the mortal heart,  
by dazzle life sift -  
and not ignite?

Springs the self-seed strong to summer redeem.  
Sprouts to master man's muse  
when humid blades blow and seasons steam.  
For youth wizens as frail flesh fails.  
Find flowerage and frost . . . avoid . . .  
Life's petals peel, but use  
the wisk-whirl of ochroid  
and finally fuse.

A sorrowful stress felt on earth: birth and end,  
but raped terrain and stars hold  
the world's wonder, the like-self send:  
an uncarnal core man's casts do not enfold.  
But Gods! --devised in mind,  
and half-men told  
of heart's uproot to find  
in man's fend.

Whole heave the human hunger and hot thirst  
the passion, pain in clouds kept  
to deep down things! . . . The tempest's worst  
hard rush sheets are fresh swept.  
From fire soar high!  
Water grown green is wept.  
Oh brace the mortal sigh  
in breathless burst.

But the briniming is the beginning, the hard, heart-caught key:  
the reason for yesternight's dream.  
Here met mind, heart, soul-three;  
a chilling still from the vision's rushed reem.  
Though all living follow,  
still rustling roams a scream,  
a wreck where I wallow  
to be unwrought free . . .

## II

Fast after fantastic idle flights, . . . fell sleep . . .  
Around aureola flared - alit.  
Fallen lids lifted to the regal creep  
of a snake-masked man in funguses knit -  
FEAR! of his shedding veil -  
his hissing in worming near fit!  
a horrified hallow wail . . .  
from drills of well's deep.

Suddenly on straw graying grass with serpent forgot.  
Inner simile: a small blazing earth  
in autumn's burning like a holding-heart's lot.  
A recalled child calls with song's birth . . .  
through the rain from ruddy trees  
to many dancing with matters to mirth-  
precise poised knees!  
Under olives roll or rot.

Amidst hedgery hues of the night-quaffed sky  
dim the glowing fruit prance.  
Angled or arched the arms swift and sigh -  
blown round a sculpt they danced-  
an ivory eternal-Eve!  
This amaryllis shown chance  
to shifting shadowed to perceive  
in my trembling, entranced try.

Milk-white woman, porcelained body bare  
began pulling her figure to flesh;  
the brief realm's vivid to form and hair.  
Drawing colors that find her flesh:  
swallowing, whiting all life,  
chalicing her chill in a mountainous mesh-  
a world-wondered wife  
with flourish filled-fair.





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FOLK DANCE  
for Violin & Harmonica in D

Lively + with Gaiety

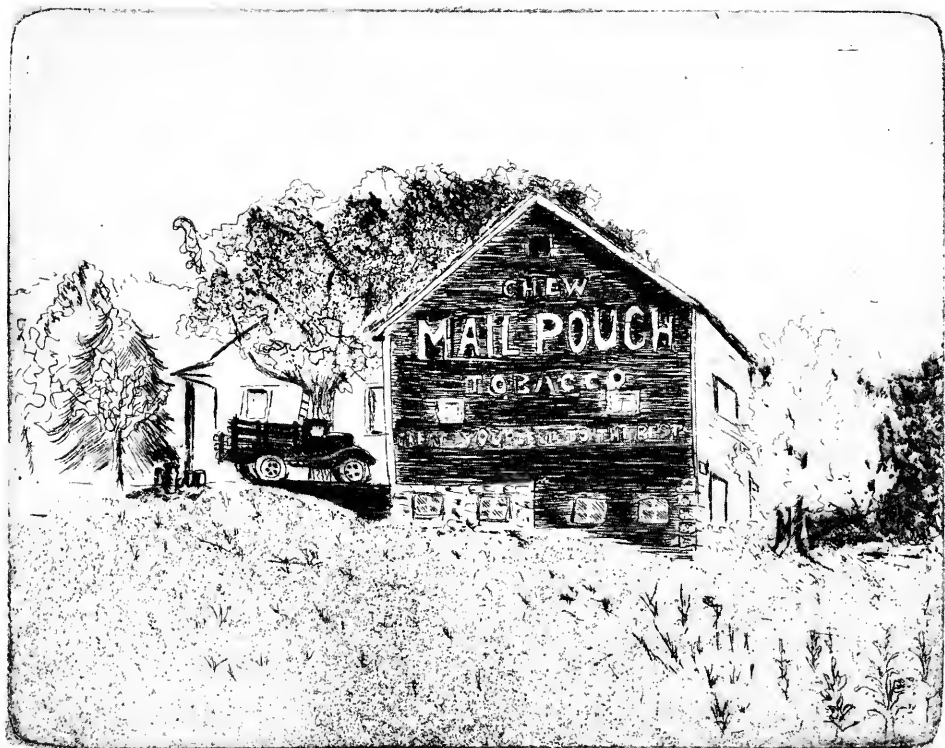
Mark Torgeson

SKETCH

Brands with a  
Lyrical Quality

for Piano Solo

Mark Torgeson



Her glow gold against the lapped lightless . . . she stirs!  
I, Double draped 'or her, 'or cradled sky,  
the rolling lips and ripples - the realness of hers!  
smoothing fingered hands, a trance ending I,  
a skin and fleece sway,  
we faceless away-  
breath-hailing, blurs.

One lit movement of tide's shrink and flow  
. . . ah! lifted patterns . . . the wordless soar!  
Wafted! . . . lost . . . now luminous whirl low . . .  
Then sheet to hunger's hurl! Senses roar! . . .  
BURST!. . . . unrended mean . . .  
All bleeds her body - of cascading gore!  
Follows charnel of shard bone . . .  
. . . her last ashes blow . . . .

Wretched awake! oh! Wit's shattering price -  
the once of flesh and life so fine!  
Will soars themselves her calm sweet suffice  
or fleet - rimed by life's frigid pine?  
So filled with world's whole!  
But cycles hold no holy line.  
Driveless bottomed bowl  
with beads of sliding ice.

How ugly the crutch and mortal's just-spurns  
to man's kin in man's plight.  
To ever grow vast rounds of years,  
sighs and ever face a stared fight.  
The din of dim cold.  
Nod with inner-warmth night -  
light breaks for bold  
when man's mind burns.

From birth man proved plans in a primitive pure;  
things became what thought's think,  
to guide guilt and drive by lust's lure.  
Life's symbols - earthen eternal links.  
Behold with brain all bare belief,  
drain all drops of drink-  
no rest on righteous reef-  
let openly endure . . .

Raw animal-man roamed Eden tied -  
struggle of a chance chided child  
by brazen beasts who rip his primal hide.  
Now by glints of bounty beguiled -  
grasping from his beast of time,  
still wrought and wild,  
caught in a defined climb,  
ungrounded by mind's guide.

Why follow the lofty, the dreams mean end?  
 To escape man in martyr-role?  
 To false fix the self for future send  
 and save for sweep of winged white soul?  
 Always the outside seek -  
 No! Gaining mind's flight the goal,  
 a winding to one peak  
 from earth's new unrend!

. . . recall the dream and tremble for its coward cuasing miss . . .  
 . . . aches the heart in awed run . . .  
 to be dangled open above the abyss -  
 the radiating warm sun  
 to ripen and dry defenses.  
 The all wondered whirl of one  
 a sought taste and senses  
 of long unblended bliss . . .

The waves swell ungained to swallow and drownd gall.  
 Oh heart miracle, dream dire  
 that throws afloat, fails to fall,  
 but lifts to flame in soul's loft inspire.  
 In sea's length lights  
 when mates mind and all  
 through man's nocturnal - brights  
 to one roaring fire!

Spring beach to the resting of sea's tune-drone,  
 peace in sea smoothed sand:  
 no matting straw by steady motion moan  
 to the rising light on placid pale land.  
 Love is heart's tool  
 to sift the stranded sand;  
 might mind over thoughts rule  
 for each crystal glows alone.

## Poem For A Big Pencil

Timothy Flatt

in, after yellow raincoats,  
 i view the mud and puddle  
 as a meaningful, visual statement.

laughs and grinned excitements,  
 let out in little  
 coughs of exploration,

puffs of their vapor,  
 a moments befriended ghost  
 hovering so close

but lost in a turn,  
 changed into nothing  
 hanging back behind.

curious feet,  
 that careless kick a can  
 along a fence,

around a corner shuffling,  
 a small train of them,  
 choos and whistles.

i hang yellow  
 above mud and puddle,  
 a wistful smile.

Shannon Elder







## Untitled Affection

dearest husband: (whatever that means)  
I think we have a problem.  
I keep seeing this bewildering vision  
    through the beige lace curtains  
    in the window at the top of the stairs:

a pomegranate fell from an earthen bowl  
    and broke into pieces on the landing.

the warm red juices  
dribbled slowly out  
from the pulpy seeds  
    onto Mother's braided rug.

please don't think I'm crazy;  
you are gone  
and I am hungry.

## An Unfertile Field

Linda Capaldi

As a sparce flippant wisp  
of grey blue smoke slinks  
along the wall and escapes  
into the air, the words,  
the final few, slide through  
the cracked corners of the ceiling,  
like drops of lonely rain  
seeping through the cracks  
to meld, and swell and splash  
useless on the carpet, the rhymes  
and lines drip upon the sheet.  
As the spores of the March  
dandelion are scattered by  
a gusting impersonal wind,  
the images are drained and faded  
and give seed to an unfertile field.

F. A. Straley

Not long ago, I found myself in a plain, bare, train station with no conception of time—only a few hours from home, yet it felt like years. I was sitting, forced rigid, on a cold, hard bench, thinking of how easy it would be to draw what I envisioned—a few basic colors—nothing but gray and black with little streams of dusty light. My baggage, tattered paper bags and a flour sack, seemed to be the only part of me that belonged in that pitiful building, worn and solemn, weighing against a very worn ground. I closed my eyes, held tight to the bench, and strained my feet to the floor.

In my darkness I could feel his eyes piercing through me. He was staring at my white face, a face that had never been whiter. Standing behind me. He thought I was unaware of his presence, but I knew, even with the constant shuffle of his boots, that he was studying me.

Attempting to unlock my mind from that powerful gaze, I watched the woman in the ticket office drink a Pepsi and listened to her monotone calls for arrivals and departures. She looked disgusted, as if she was trapped into her position behind the marred plastic window. A train went by, shaking up the world, without succeeding in enlivening the ancient building. My immediate environment was forever ragged. The snack machine contained a lone cupcake that could only make you lose your appetite. Even the air was heavy and came through me in slow breaths. A sad attempt at decor caught my attention—a vase of muddy, yellow, plastic flowers inside the ticket office. I felt sorry for all my inanimate surroundings. Sorrow thickened as I watched the ticket lady sweep a desolate ground.

His face, as black as it was, as black as that train station was, looked profoundly clear to me. “Would you mind if I sat next to you?” asked my observer, cautiously, suddenly nearer to me, yet keeping a distance. I accepted this frail, slightly wrinkled, black man with a bewildered nod. He was scared, and I knew that whatever was to come out of his mouth would be measured before uttering. He had something to say, but I could not help him. He looked at me as if I was a blinding light that he could not overcome. He asked, once more as if my permission was a necessity, if he could tell me a story.

It was a good story that progressed as his eyes became more used to the light next to him. He talked about a black woman who was unhappy with her looks, who searched for beauty by taking painful steps at straightening her hair. I could just see her tugging at her kinky hair, frustrated and ignored. He told me of a young black boy whose favorite plaything was a Barbie doll. I imagined the boy fascinated by the Barbie’s soft skin and smooth hair, hiding the doll in a dark corner and only taking her out when no one would know.

Another nerve-wracked train made its way to the old station. Suddenly, time came back to life, rushed and impatient. My train gave its warning call and I grasped a grown black boy’s wrinkled hand. Holding tight, I brought his skin in contact with my unkinked hair. I left, hesitantly, a white female, able to induce fear in another human being by simply existing.



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## Age

Painful to look at, his careful steps  
lead him uncertainly down the street  
while onlookers shudder to see the wreck  
of a human life that they, too, soon will be.  
Does he not realize that he quivers?  
Someone his age should be inside  
wrapped up, warm, and under covers,  
closely watched, kept calm and quiet.  
It is sad to think that we, too, will get old  
but of course that's very far away yet  
right now it's unpleasant to be reminded:  
it's something we all would much rather forget.  
But here is this man tottering about  
they really should have put him away  
he may hurt himself or others around him  
for he looks like he's liable to go any day.  
Wearily walking up post office steps  
the old one stoops to look in his box  
shuffles his letters as he leaves the building  
and fades into oblivion as he goes down the road.

Leslie Wells

## Mirror

Asleep:  
    the concious mind gives way.  
Its cleverly contrived angles  
of fabricated logic built  
on human reason chosen from  
specific facts supportive of  
our strengths and casting shadows o-  
ver that which we believe to be  
our weaknesses have disappeared

(The complicated structure of  
our calculations, explana-  
tions, infestations, others' state-  
ments, hiding what we are to show  
what we think others think that we  
should be, means nothing here at all.):

Leaving only  
the unconcious,  
striving to reveal the true self,  
so bereft of waking logic  
we cannot begin to under-  
stand the little bit that we re-  
member . . .  
Is it any wonder  
we don't remember more of what  
we dream?

Amy R. Sanderson

### The Pit

But why am i in the pit?  
I'm standing here in the darkness  
in the bottom of the pit.  
The light can never get in,  
And i can never get out of  
the deep darkness of the pit.

I strain my eyes and cannot see the light –  
I know; yes, i've been told the light exists.  
The people of the light stand near the mouth,  
Stand near the pit and speak them down at me.

But why am i in the pit?  
Why stranded here in the madness  
in the bottom of the pit?  
I try to live by the light,  
But only live by the madness  
in the darkness of the pit.

But why am i in the pit?

Devin







## The Poem

a poem

struggling form;

a poem,

it's nothing with everything tossed in,

it's the dead hanging on a taut rope,

that teaches how the poet cried

and scribbled down some words and tried,

a poem;

something we all look at, one time, another if we're

asked, and a third if it's good,

a poem; good for nothing you can't eat it but  
it feeds classrooms,

a poem; a soft tender song of birds in spring skipping  
lightly over the buttered cup,

a poem; the dead song bird,

a poem; twisted flickers of incandescent light that  
shoot from mirror to mirror back into the open glare  
of a yearning eye,

a poem; God delivered us from poems and might take them away  
a good God he would be and we would write  
poems about it after they were taken, the right to  
scroll, and the apple would be eaten,

the dead still catch the tired rope,

the poet still cries till his paper's wet,

a poem, still nothing but everything;  
a poem,  
struggling form;  
a poem.

S. M. Newman

Lay hush soft child and let the evening rest,  
Its harvest light is drawing closed the shade,  
Already crickets sound the coming night.

Small dressed in harmless face all secrets kept,  
And none to break and no briar huts to guard,  
Lay hush soft child and let the evening rest.

You made your living as a mud-artist,  
A puddle-stomp, and led the Toads' Crusade.  
Already crickets sound the coming night.

The goats you goat danced with will grieve their priest,  
Their goatherd called by lights' appeal to fade.  
Lay hush soft child and let the evening rest.

Your step canters the stair as now I list  
The times and more the patience in this trade;  
Already crickets sound the coming night.

As crows in dark are lured to autums roost  
And leaves tangle to talk the gloam's chill wind,  
Lay hush soft child and let the evening rest  
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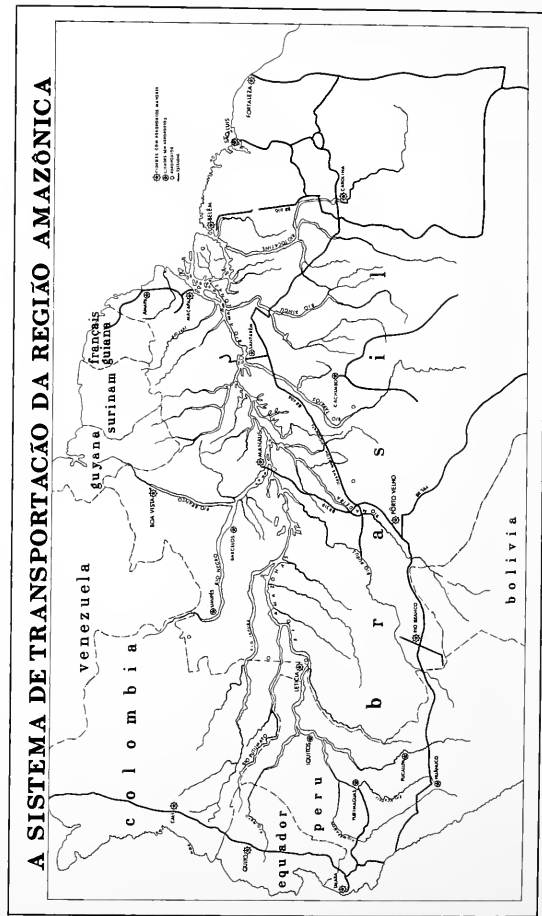
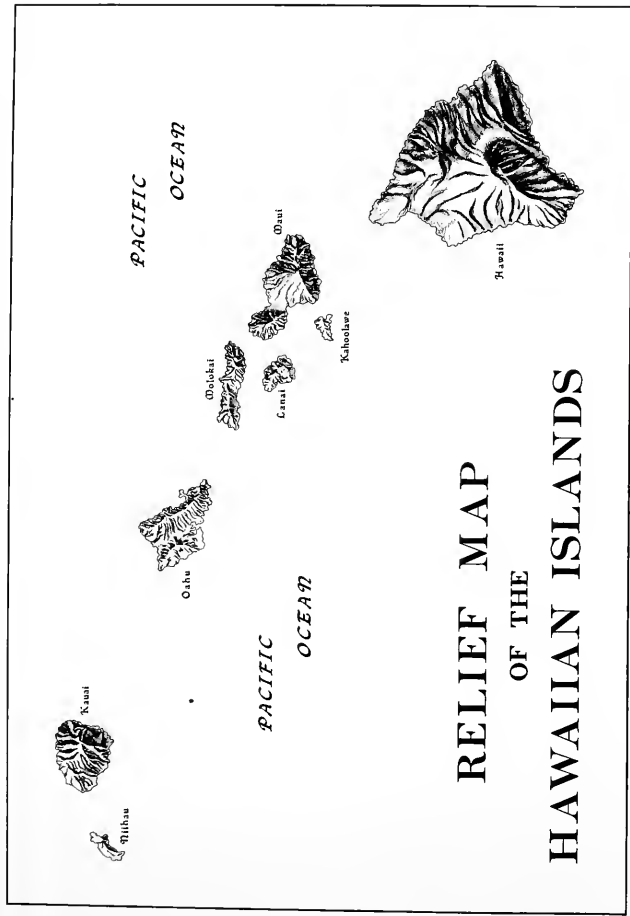
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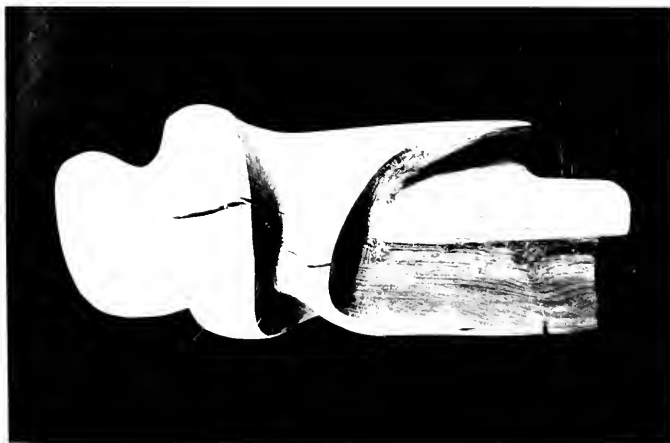
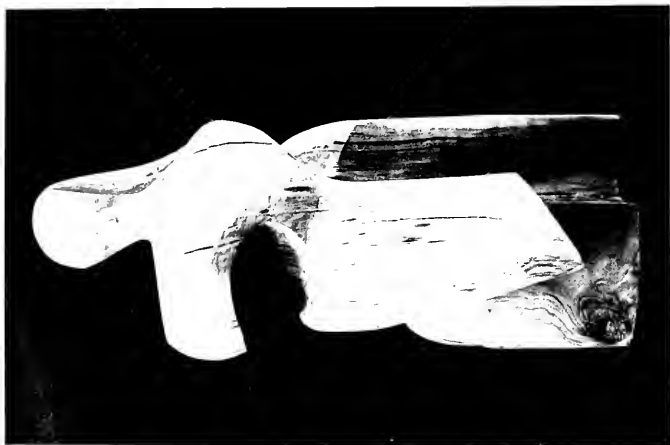








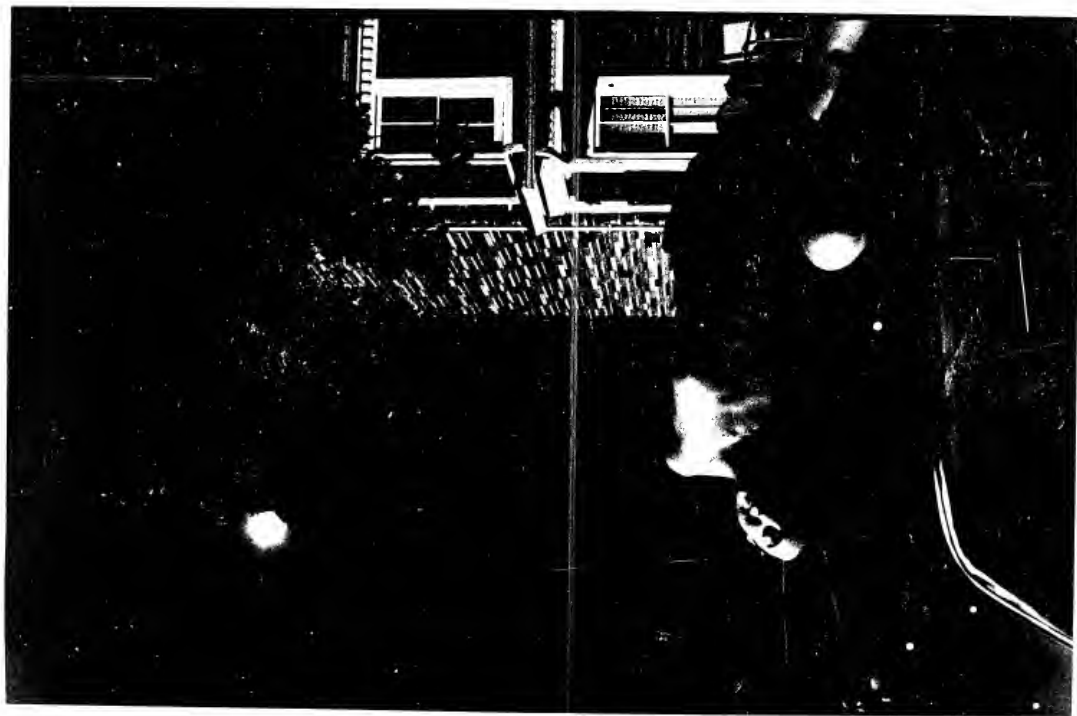
















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